

# 5 YEAR ReCONNECT

forging

meaningful

connections

across

generations

# SINCE 1875

**In the history of every great nonprofit, there comes a time when vision, leadership, community, and generosity come together to transform an organization.**

The Tower Heritage Center, home to the Washington County Historical Society, believes in forging meaningful connections across generations to Washington County's hard-working legacy. And it has been our mission in some form since 1875!

We are passionate about drawing connections between the past and present, in our region and beyond while staying true to our roots as THE source of information about many bygone eras.

This past year, we've achieved our greatest challenge yet: **becoming a fully independent nonprofit**. Thanks to community support, we are now the sole caretakers of the iconic 1889 Courthouse, 1886 Jailhouse, and 1912 Carriage House.

Exciting changes, right? Would you believe this is only the beginning?



Visit our  
website to get  
to know  
us better!

Below: View of the Courthouse Square  
Grounds in West Bend. Captured in 1897.



# THE FUTURE IS EXCITING.

**In our digital world, we're  
connected everywhere - yet  
disconnected from how  
history defines us.**

We believe in the importance of connection. It's what creates purpose and meaning in our lives. Together, we seek to uncover compelling stories that define and unify.

For most of our existence, we've held a quiet reputation. Few know the wonders living in the red-roofed buildings up the hill.

As we embark on a new chapter, we endeavor to bring life into these spaces to forge meaningful connections across generations.

We are BEYOND excited to announce the most ambitious growth initiative in our history - the **5-Year ReConnect**.

The 5-Year ReConnect is an opportunity for us to reconnect with the community through our shared heritage. It's about reconnecting with our roots, our history, and each other to make a difference in the community.

Through this action report, we'll be exploring initiatives that will help our county and its history thrive.

Welcome to our future! We're so glad to have you along for the journey! →

# 5 YEAR ReCONNECT

## THE FIVE-YEAR RECONNECT IS...

- The most ambitious growth initiative in
- About evolving our ability to offer differ
- A catalyst to enrich the mission and visi
- An opportunity for us to reconnect with

## CAMPAIGN FOCUSES

TOTAL GOAL: \$1.27M

### 1865 Frisby House 1

Evolve our ability to offer different experiences that connect people to The Tower Heritage Center and Washington County's heritage.

\$119,000 - Restoration  
\$56,000 - Welcome Center

\$175,000

### 1889 Courthouse 2

Intentionally leverage the original design and later alterations of our icon to better serve our society.

\$85,000 - Museum Update  
\$65,000 - Courthouse Updates

\$150,000

### 1886 Jailhouse 3

Enhance the attraction to this rare resource by providing an authentic historic house museum experience.

\$500,000

### Courthouse Square Grounds 4

Generate an attractive nature-based space that can be utilized for public enjoyment and heritage-based programming.

\$50,000 - Garden  
\$15,000 - Signage

\$65,000

### Media 5

Continuing growing ways to interact and engage with people beyond our walls.

\$130,000 - Mobile App  
\$250,000 - Documentary

\$380,000



## COMMUNITY OUTCOMES

**Meaningful experiences** that connect us to our identity and our roots

**Heritage everywhere** through creating evergreen content that makes our stories reachable and relevant to all audiences

**Educational opportunities** to learn about history through restored spaces, enhanced museum exhibits, and quality events and programs

**Resources for community businesses** to preserve the hard-working legacy and entrepreneurial spirit of Washington County

**Purposeful relationships** that engage the community and increase collaboration between local businesses and organizations

## GET CONNECTED

If you're interested in getting involved, we'd love to arrange a time to have a meaningful conversation with you.



Give us a call at (262) 335-4678 or visit our website, [thetowerheritagecenter.org](http://thetowerheritagecenter.org), by scanning the QR code

our history

ent experiences that build meaningful relationships across generations

on of The Tower Heritage Center, supporting the long-term sustainability of the organization

n the community through our shared heritage



## Welcome to the Heritage Center

1915 Plat Map of the South Part of the City of West Bend

## LET'S GROW, TOGETHER

### Campaign goals



This year

### 2024 - 2025 at a glance:

- 1865 Frisby House
  - Restoration
  - Welcome center
- 1889 Courthouse
  - Community business incubator space
  - Museum refresh

### Ways to give:

- Become a sustaining donor
- Make a planned gift
- Invest time & talents

## THANK YOU!

The Tower Heritage Center is grateful for ALL donors, partners, and volunteers who have contributed to our shared vision and impact. You make it all possible!

# ReDiscover the 1865 FRISBY HOUSE

This year, The Tower Heritage Center has the opportunity to preserve a local landmark. It's a pleasure to introduce you to the newest addition to our campus, the 1865 Frisby House. At its lively intersection on Poplar and Main Street, the Frisby House is positioned as a doorway to the Heritage Center, the icon of West Bend's historic downtown.

**This Italianate Cream City brick building will redefine our ability to offer different experiences that connect people to Washington County's heritage.**

The iconic 1865 Frisby House will serve as a purposeful **welcome center** and **intimate program space**.

Coming in from the enclosed front porch, guests will step back into 1865. The main rooms on the first floor will be fully restored, creating an immersive, memorable experience. Modular exhibits will add context to the space, highlighting the storied past of the home, its residents, and Washington County's origins.

The welcome center will offer unique mercantile through partnerships and

collaborations with local businesses and artisans. On the side of the house is an open outdoor space for the community, to slow down and take in this history at any time.

In the 1865 Frisby House, we'll be hosting events and workshops with locally connected goods available in the welcome center. The programs have a contemporary focus, rooted in history. They'll occur regularly, with endless opportunities for collaboration.

Upstairs, will be the new operational hub for The Tower Heritage Center, allowing increased collaboration and reach.

We're on the threshold of a monumental project that will transform our organization and expand our impact within the county.

To make this all possible, it will cost \$175,000. The project is slated to be completed in 2025. Throughout this time frame, we'll have opportunities for community involvement. This building is a beacon of Washington County's past. We want everyone to have the ability to be a part of its story in some form or other.

**Across:** (Top) 1865 Frisby House at the intersection of Poplar and Main Street. Captured in 1939.

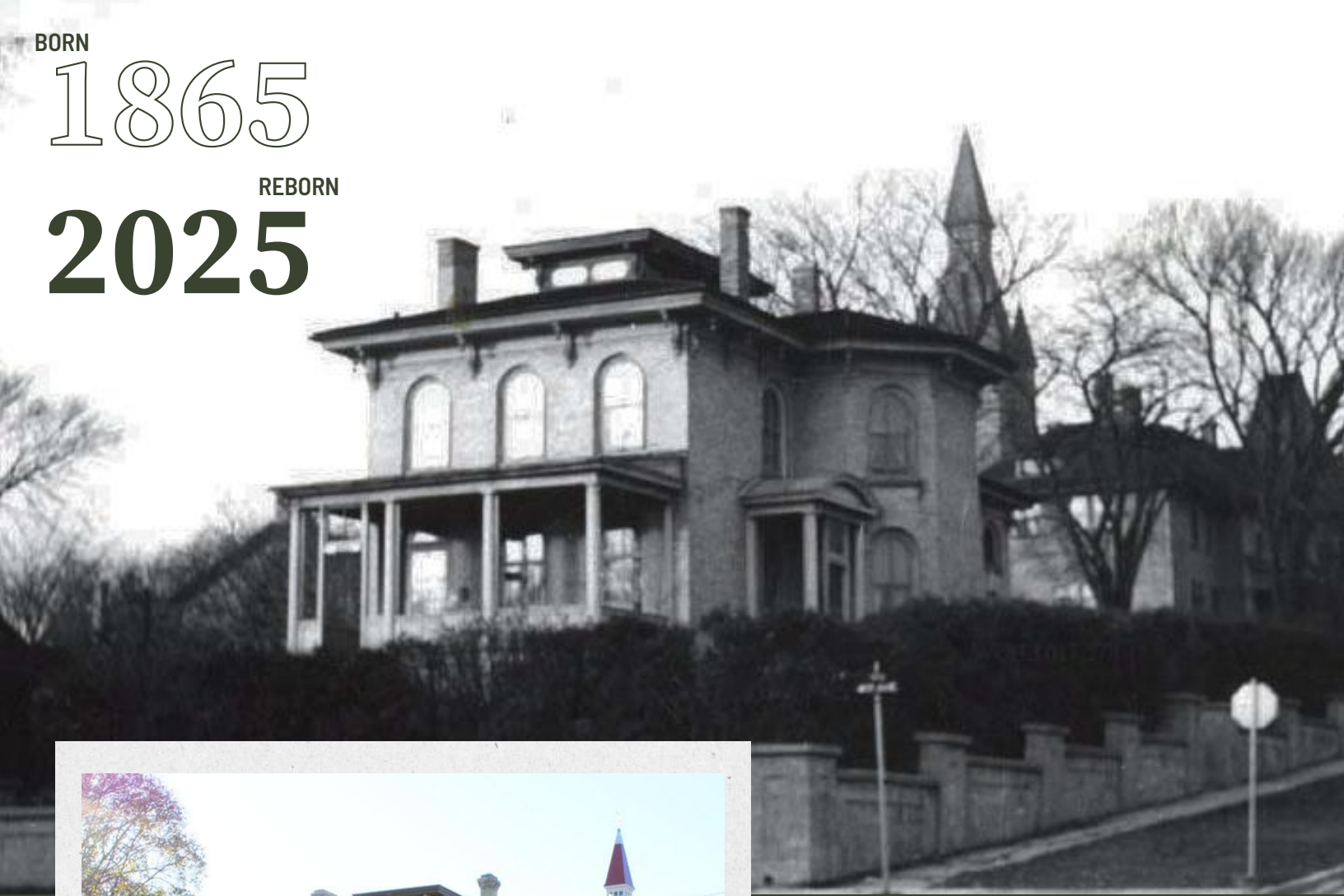
**Across:** (Middle) Present day view of the 1865 Frisby House, in care of The Tower Heritage Center

BORN

1865

REBORN

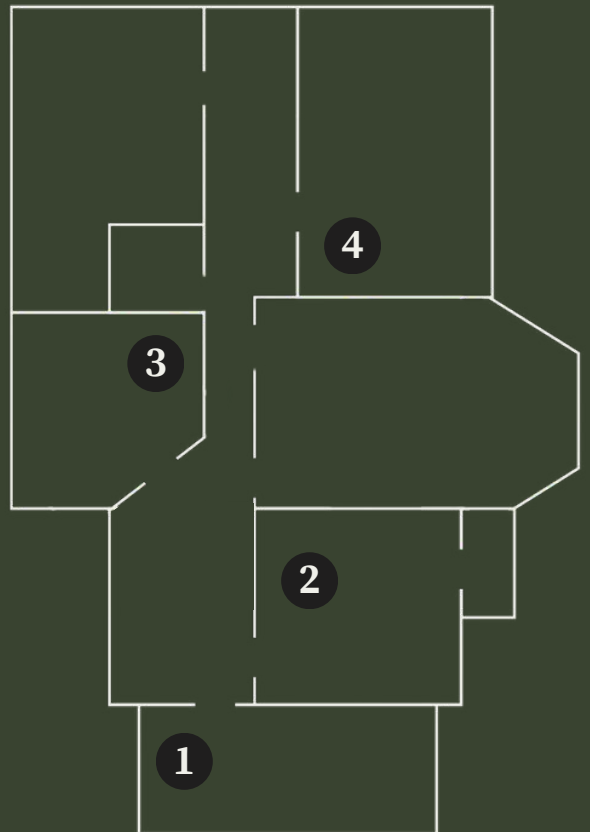
2025



# Welcome Center

## FIRST FLOOR OF THE 1865 FRISBY HOUSE

- 1 - Entry through the enclosed front porch
- 2 - Fully restored front rooms
- 3 - Modular exhibits throughout the house
- 4 - Space for mercantile and events



# Relmagine the 1889 COURTHOUSE

Across: (Top) Mock-up of a conference room  
(Below) Event venue space in the courtroom  
of the 1889 Courthouse

For over a century, the 1889 Courthouse has been an unmistakable landmark of Washington County. As The Tower Heritage Center evolves, we're pursuing ways to intentionally leverage our icon's original design and later alterations to better serve the community.

On the first floor, museum exhibits are being refreshed and right-sized for continued sustainability.

Exhibits account for the centralized area, including:

- A spacious 3-year rotating exhibit
- An exhibit on the Courthouse Square
- A video room with short documentaries

To revitalize the museum and continue preservation efforts in the 1889 Courthouse, we're looking at \$85,000. Work for this project is already underway, with a targeted completion in 2025.

Moving on, the second floor of the 1889 Courthouse will be home to the beloved Research Center and Archive. This location will be more accessible, creating a better experience for researchers.

Ok, so what about the rest of the space?

By shifting operations over to the 1865 Frisby House, we have the opportunity to

unveil our most ambitious program yet, and it all starts with the expansion of our membership offerings.

With purposeful design, we'll be able to launch a community business incubator space. As a member-centered offering, it will serve start-ups, nonprofits, small businesses, and corporations by providing space and resources. Incubator and coworking areas are hubs for collaboration and innovation. It's a space for all the doers - who know that good work takes hard work.

Pretty amazing, right?

Updates to the Courthouse to make this possible are estimated to cost \$65,000. Work will begin immediately in the new year, allowing us to unroll the program in late 2024.

Offerings will include:

- Coworking space
- Dedicated desks
- Dedicated office space
- Conference room access
- Additional amenities

These offerings are available to all members on a tiered basis. We'll be sharing more information on this exciting initiative soon!

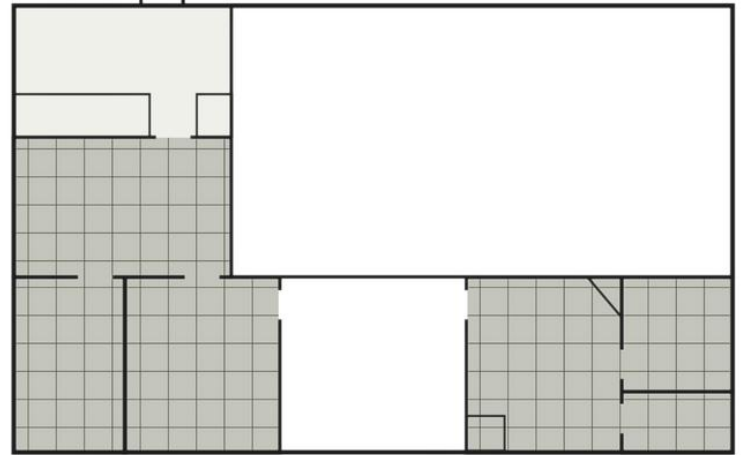
Across: (Middle) Research Center & Archives  
(Below) Mock-up of coworking space.  
(Bottom) 1889 Courthouse





# THIRD FLOOR

Amenities

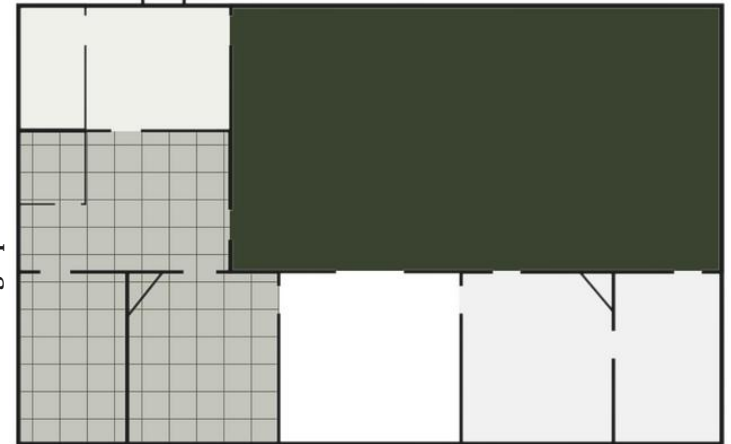


Coworking space

# SECOND FLOOR

Event venue

Coworking space

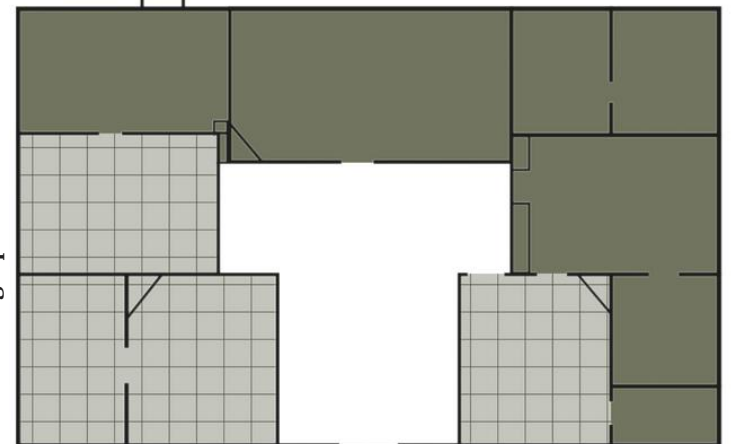


Research Center and Archive

# FIRST FLOOR

Museum exhibits

Coworking space



# ReExperience the 1886 JAILHOUSE

Built to be escape-proof - but was it?

The most unique item in The Tower Heritage Center's collection is the 1886 Jailhouse - truly one of two with a fully intact cell block in the upper Great Lakes.

From 1886 to 1962, it served as Washington County's prided Jailhouse. Today, it's a museum located on the Courthouse Square Grounds. Guided tours bring guests through the Sheriff's home and workplace as well as the cell block. The 1886 Jailhouse has always drawn interest, however, it's in need of preservation work and a unified interpretation.

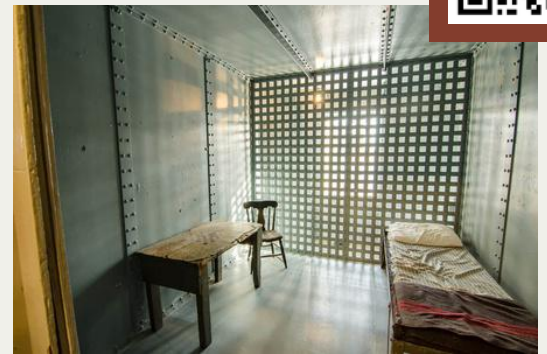
**Our vision is to reactivate this site, fully restoring it to 1886. Creating an immersive house museum experience, complete with light mapping technology.**

This project is targeted to begin mid-2025. The undertaking is substantial, but we recognize the value of this place as a tangible piece of Washington County's history. Through furthering preservation efforts, the 1886 Jailhouse will continue to be remembered for generations to come.

The reactivation will cost \$500,000. It includes conservation techniques, interpretative elements, replica furniture, exhibit design, and so much more!



TAKE A  
VIRTUAL  
TOUR



Across: (Top) The 1886 Jailhouse in 1958.  
(Below) A cell in the Jailhouse

Across: (Middle) View of the cell block  
(Bottom) Current exhibit in the Jailhouse

# COURTHOUSE SQUARE GROUNDS

Generate an attractive nature-based space that can be utilized for public enjoyment or leveraged for heritage-based programming

## LANDSCAPING

Clean up existing landscape to better represent the property as it was in the 1880s/90s. Purposefully install a garden space and reproduction landscape.

Follow period-appropriate design and use heirloom seeds to forge an authentic atmosphere, with unique programmatic and partnership opportunities.

## SIGNAGE

Install select outdoor signs with specific heritage-based information about the site in strategic locations throughout the property.

This project will begin in 2026, allowing visitors to interact with the Courthouse Square Grounds at any time.

Inspiration for a Victorian-era inspired garden



ELEMENTS



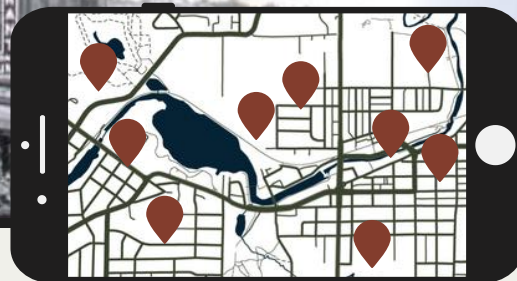
SIGNAGE



PLANT LIFE

Connect with

# HERITAGE EVERYWHERE



## MOBILE APP

Develop a heritage-based mobile app that guides users on walking tours, complete with historic images from our collection and content relating to each community. The app creates an immersive experience through the use of augmented reality and geolocating technology.

The project will begin in 2025, allowing us to connect with heritage everywhere.

## DOCUMENTARY SERIES

Expand our ability to offer engaging content with a documentary series.

With an external video production company, we'll create episodes about each hamlet of Washington County.

The project will begin in 2026, with countless opportunities for partnerships and involvement.

# The Tower Heritage Center

HOME TO THE WASHINGTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

320 S 5th Avenue · West Bend, WI 53095

262.335.4678

[thetowerheritagecenter.org](http://thetowerheritagecenter.org)



## THE 5 YEAR ReCONNECT IS...

- The most ambitious growth initiative in our history
- About evolving our ability to offer different experiences that build meaningful relationships across generations
- A catalyst to enrich the mission and vision of The Tower Heritage Center, supporting the long-term sustainability of the organization
- An opportunity for us to reconnect with the community through our shared heritage

